

## NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

### IRRIGATION FIELD DITCH – CODE 388

### OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Land Owner/Operator \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Parish \_\_\_\_\_ SWCD \_\_\_\_\_ Farm/Tract No. \_\_\_\_\_

Practice Location      Section \_\_\_\_\_ Township \_\_\_\_\_ Range \_\_\_\_\_

Prepared By \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

A properly operated and maintained irrigation field ditch is an asset to the farm. This ditch is designed and installed to convey water from the source of supply to a field or fields in a farm distribution system. The estimated life span of this installation is at least 10 years. The life of this installation can be assured and usually increased by developing and carrying out a good operation and maintenance program.

This practice will require you to perform periodic operation to maintain satisfactory performance. Here are some recommendations to help you develop a good operation and maintenance program:

#### GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Conduct periodic and post-storm inspections to detect and minimize damage to the field ditch.
- Maintain cross section and gradient by controlling ditch erosion and bank sloughing of side slopes and berms.
- Immediately remove silt deposits, obstructions, or blockage of the drainage system that includes channel spillways, trash racks, inlets, or outlets.
- Maintain growth of planned vegetative coverings. This includes reseeding, fertilization, and application of herbicides when necessary. Periodic mowing may also be needed to control excessive growth. Avoid direct drainage water contact with herbicides.
- Remove all foreign debris that hinders system operation.
- Install and maintain fences to control livestock access when adjacent fields are used for pasture.
- Replace damaged structures to constructed grade.
- Immediately repair any vandalism, vehicular, or livestock damage.
- Inspect for damage from rodents or burrowing animals. Repair any damage. Take appropriate corrective actions to alleviate further damage.

#### ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Contact your local NRCS Field Office for any additional technical assistance you might need for implementation of this operation and maintenance plan for your irrigation canal or lateral.